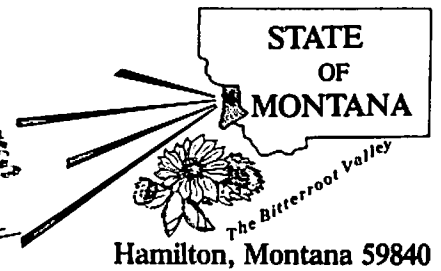
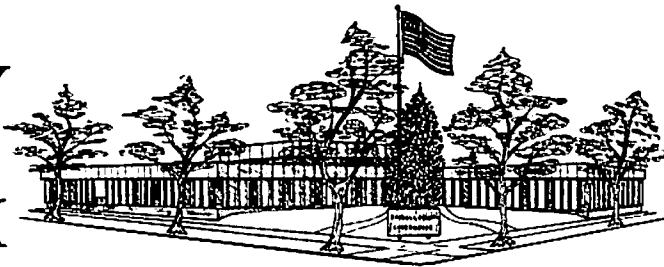


COUNTY OF RAVALLI



Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT. 59480
406-375-6500

March 13, 2008

Montana Department of Commerce
CDBG-ED Program
Helena, MT

Re: #MT-CDBG-ED06-07

To Whom It May Concern:

The Ravalli County Commissioners would like to thank the Department of Commerce for their support of Ravalli County, through a CDBG-ED grant of \$400,000 for hiring and training at GlaxoSmithKline.

Many Ravalli County low to moderate income (LMI) citizens work two or three jobs and have no healthcare benefits for themselves or their families. Through this grant 59 new employees were hired, 29 of those were LMI citizens. The average wage at GSK is \$42,000.

The 59 new employees added \$2.1 million to the GSK payroll. The total annual payroll for GSK is over \$12 million. To house the new employees and additional production a 130,000 sq. ft. \$137 million dollar expansion were completed in 2007 by GSK.

Ravalli County desperately needed the kick start that retaining and expanding GSK brought to our community. Traditional jobs in the timber industry and agriculture that had previously brought wealth and quality of life to the people have been in a severe decline for decades.

Continuing to develop an economy focused on knowledge and clean technology is a large part of once again having good paying jobs that allow a majority of our citizen's access to quality of life.

GSK is a manufacturer of MPL (monophosphoryl lipid A); the GSK facility is the only place in the world where the MPL adjuvant is manufactured. Production has doubled and continues to rise creating additional jobs.

The technology for MPL was locally grown by Edgar Ribí, a scientist at Rocky Mountain Laboratories (RML) 30 years ago. With the technology Ribí's company Ribí ImmunoChem was born. Ribí was purchased by Corixa Corp. In 2002 Corixa was poised to leave Montana, looking to Ohio where incentives and infrastructure were available to a growing company. With the Department of Commerce' help (and many others) infrastructure issues were overcome.

In 2005 GSK acquired Corixa. Once again we turned to the Department of Commerce for a hiring and training grant. Thanks to the CDBG program for economic development 292 positions have been retained at GSK at the conclusion of this grant. The tax base has increased by over \$3 million dollars and property taxes from new home owners are over \$110,000.

There is little doubt that the opportunities in the bio science sector will continue to grow in and around Ravalli County spurred by GSK and RML. Ravalli County is a leader in Montana's bio tech sector.

The Ravalli County Commissioners, for themselves and for the citizens, would like to thank the MT Department of Commerce for their support.

Sincerely,


Carlotta Grandstaff, Chairman
Ravalli County Commissioners